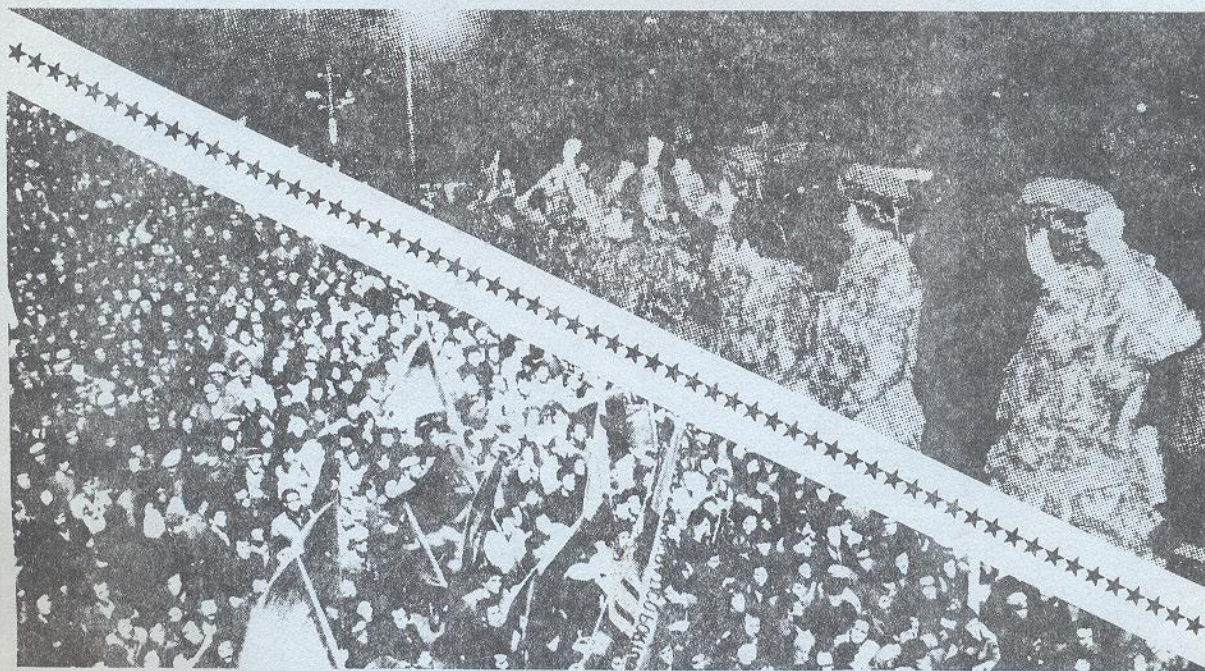


PORTUGAL – THE FIGHT FOR WORKERS POWER

VIEWS AND POLICIES OF THE
PORTUGUESE TROTSKYISTS



AN
INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP
PAMPHLET

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INTRODUCTION

THE immense upsurge of the Portuguese working class in the wake of the coup which overthrew the fascist regime has raised the banner of socialist revolution on the European continent in a way which has not been seen since the Spanish civil war. The proletarian creativity displayed by the Portuguese workers in coming to grips with the capitalist crisis and the plots of their ruling class are the real raw materials out of which *workers' power* can be constructed. But the recent elections reveal that although the ruling class is unable to solve its crisis of leadership, the workers movement suffers from an equally grave crisis. The sweeping electoral victory of the Socialist Party, an organisation whose links with the workers movement are slight and which has often sided objectively with reaction in the recent past, and the PPD, an outright bourgeois party, must in large part be laid at the door of the Portuguese Communist Party's class collaborationist policies. Their opposition to the emergence of an independent workers power has prevented the growth of the only force which could have broken the Portuguese masses from the political influence of the bourgeoisie and united them in the fight against capitalism.

The following pages contain the most important statements of the International Communist League (LCI), Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International. While still a very small group, the LCI is already playing a major role in the fight to forge a revolutionary leadership for the Portuguese working class and develop its struggles into a fight for workers power.

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Iberian Trotskyists' declaration

The following declaration was issued shortly after the 25 April coup by the LCI (International Communist League: Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International), LCR-ETA VI (Revolutionary Communist League-Basque Nation and Freedom, Sixth Congress: Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International), and the UOR (Revolutionary Workers Union: a Portuguese revolutionary organisation that has since fused with the LCI.) This statement embodies the spirit of proletarian internationalism which the LCI has strived to implant in the Portuguese workers' struggles, and points the way forward to the unity of the entire working class of the Iberian peninsula in their common struggle against capitalist reaction.

The sinister Salazar-Coetano dictatorship has ceased to exist. Faced by a situation that promised soon to become intolerable, a section of the bourgeoisie acted through its army and overthrew the fascist regime that was incapable of controlling either the mass movement in Portugal or the struggles in the colonies. But the working class and the working masses took advantage of this grave crisis of bourgeois leadership to take to the streets themselves and to destroy the fascist repressive apparatus (the secret police, the Legion, the fascist bands) by their own action.

The mass demonstrations began on April 25, the very day of the coup, and continued through succeeding days -- thousands of people marching with banners, shouting militant slogans, carrying red flags. In the course of these days thousands of voices were raised demanding "End the colonial war now!" "Immediate independence for the colonies!" "Not one more soldier for the colonies!" Concurrently, slogans were raised around social demands (minimum wage of 6,000 escudos for all) and democratic demands (right to strike, freedom of expression and association). These demands were the ones most deeply felt by the factory workers, employees, and students. Vanguard militants (those of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista and the União Operária Revolucionária, as well as others) were followed by thousands of demonstrators when they carried banners affirming the independence of the working class and its leading role in the revolutionary process that will end capitalist rule: "Down with capitalist exploitation!" "Power to the Workers!" "Workers, soldiers: Socialist revolution!" Throughout the country, hundreds and thousands of soldiers and sailors demonstrated, many with fists raised, carrying red banners, marching shoulder to shoulder with the workers: They also took up the slogans, especially those calling for the unity of all the workers, whether in uniform or not, like: "Workers and soldiers, it's the same struggle!"

The "Junta of National Health" headed by General Spínola began to become concerned about these gigantic militant demonstrations and about the beginning of the organization of the workers, inside and outside the army: the antifascist actions in the factories and in the media, the influx of members into the unions, the meetings of soldiers and sailors in the barracks and on the ships, the emergence and development of political parties, and so on. This combativity and this beginning of organization showed the junta that the Portuguese workers will not let themselves be fooled so easily, that they will respond through struggle to the deterioration of their living and working conditions, that millions of Portuguese demand an immediate end to the colonial war, that ever broader sections of soldiers and sailors (workers and employees in uniform) are not prepared to board ships for the colonies and fight against their African worker comrades.

The LCI and the UOR are jointly confronting their tasks of getting into the working class and mobilizing the students. They are forming anticolonialist committees to support the struggle against Portuguese imperialism; they are developing antimilitarist activity in the army and among the student and worker youth, with the active support of the Fourth International and in particular of the LCR-ETA, VI of Spain.

- * DOWN WITH PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM!
- * IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENCE FOR THE COLONIES!
- * END THE COLONIAL WAR NOW!
- * LONG LIVE THE ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST PORTUGUESE IMPERIALISM!
- * LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITY OF THE WORKERS AND EMPLOYEES OF PORTUGAL AND THE COLONIES!
- * FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL AND THE COLONIES!



LCI demonstration against departure of troops to Africa.

After the murder of the anarchist militant Salvador Puig Antich, the Francoist dictatorship carried out preventive arrests of more than 400 militants of the workers and revolutionary organizations, among them several members of the LCR-ETA, VI. At the same time, the press has announced that death sentences have been asked against five more people, one anarchist and four Maoists. To defend all militants of all workers organizations against repression no matter what their political affiliation is an urgent task for all workers and revolutionaries.

- * SOLIDARITY WITH THE SPANISH WORKERS AND REVOLUTIONARIES AGAINST REPRESSION!
- * FREE ALL THE POLITICAL PRISONERS!
- * DOWN WITH THE FRANCOIST DICTATORSHIP!

Salazar made an alliance with this bloody dictatorship. It was called the Iberian Pact. The Junta of National Health, as General Spínola told the Spanish press, is disinclined to break this pact, or even to "transform" it. The Portuguese workers who overthrew fascism must demand the breaking of the Iberian Pact and all other alliances with Franco's murderous dictatorship.

- * NO PACT, NO ALLIANCE WITH THE FRANCOIST DICTATORSHIP!
- * PORTUGAL MUST BE A BASE OF SUPPORT FOR SPANISH REVOLUTIONARIES!

The political situation and the Constituent Assembly

The following analysis of the political situation in Portugal was made by the LCI at the beginning of this year and published in their paper *Luta Proletaria (Proletarian Struggle)* on 14 January. At the same time a special conference of the LCI decided to take part in the Constituent Assembly elections. This document outlines the perspectives within which this step was made.

The fall of the fascist dictatorship became necessary not only because its policy was entering into contradiction with the interests and development of the most dynamic sectors of finance capital, but also because it had proven itself incapable of resolving the political and military crisis created by the intensification of the armed struggle of the workers in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau and by the rise of workers struggles in Portugal.

The factors that explain the contradictory character of the situation that arose after April 25, 1974, were the contradictory character of the various forces that were involved in the fall of dictatorship and the fact that the dictatorship was overthrown by the initiative of a layer of young officers subject to diverse influences and threatened by military defeat in Africa.

For an initial period, the military coup of April 25 appeared in large part as a preventive maneuver on the part of Spínola and the most lucid sectors of finance capital. But in the situation prevailing immediately after the coup, another factor was brought into play: Certain sectors of the left of the Armed Forces Movement (AFM) had radicalized be-

cause of the repressive context in which they had to work out their action under the fascist dictatorship and because of the influence exerted on some of the members of the AFM by democratic organizations and reformist worker organizations.

In addition, through the massive strikes and demonstrations that followed the fall of fascism and the powerful May 1 demonstration the workers succeeded in improving their working and living conditions. They dealt many important blows to the fascist state apparatus, expelled the administrators and officials tied to the fascist apparatus and the leaders of the corporatist trade unions from the factories. Thus, they shifted the relationship of forces between the capitalists and the working class in their favor and made it difficult for Spínola's development plans to be implemented.

The development of the class struggle extended into the army. The struggle of the workers in uniform, the soldiers and sailors, was directed essentially against military discipline and the sending of troops to the colonies, as well as toward objectives related to the conditions of life in the barracks

In Guinea the Portuguese soldiers fraternized with

the fighters of the PAIGC, going beyond the instructions coming from Lisbon and thus forcing Spínola and the Junta of National Salvation to immediately recognize the independence of Guinea-Bissau under the leadership of the PAIGC.

During this period the working class openly went over to the offensive, despite all the political and organizational backwardness inherited from the period of fascism. Not having any political parties worthy of the name, the bourgeoisie was compelled to call upon the Communist and Socialist parties and the MDP, which integrated themselves into a National Front government with the PPD, whose ambition to become the party of finance capital was already obvious.

This was made possible because the government crystallized around the recognition and application of the program of the Armed Forces Movement. This is a program that, while adapted to the interests of finance capital, was put forward by some petty-bourgeois sectors of the AFM probably influenced by the policies followed by the Communist and Socialist parties; that is, a policy of alliance between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie and the nonmonopolist sectors of the bourgeoisie. In any case, whether this direct influence existed or not, a convergence of the type described would still have been possible.

The role of the reformist workers parties within the government inevitably had to be to contain the struggles of the workers within the narrow framework of private property. The guarantee of these parties' will to act in this way derived from their own reformist positions, their acceptance of the bourgeois-democratic program of the AFM, and their dependence on the president of the republic, the Junta of National Salvation, and the Coordinating Committee of the AFM.

The period that we are describing here was the period of the strikes at Lisnave, the strike and occupation of Timex, the struggle of the Lisbon transport workers (Carris), the strikes of the workers of the TAP (national airlines), and the strikes in the postal system (CTT) and the textile industry. It was a time of many strikes with occupations of the factories by the workers and of the emergence of many workers commissions. These commissions were in large part a response to the division of workers into different unions, even within the same factory

(fascist union organizations). But the workers' actions often developed to the point that real strike leaderships were formed and continued with the perspective of defending the gains won in struggle against layoffs, the work pace, and the hierarchical system in the plants, all within the framework of workers control. Many workers journals began coming out (O Trabalhador da Messa, O Novo Portuário, Jornal da Greve da Efacec-Inel, etc.).

The proletariat, especially its most advanced sectors, increased its consciousness of the decisive role it plays in production and made advances in combativity, experience, and organization. But at the same time, in view of its relatively low level of political consciousness, the working class confused partial and conjunctural victories with definitive, irreversible ones.

In face of the development of struggles, and in a context in which no new regime could stabilize itself, the capitalists, the Junta of National Salvation, and the AFM, each in its own way, demonstrated two major concerns: avoiding a massive and direct repression, and at the same time making some social and wage concessions in certain sectors and seeking to control inflation and hold prices down. But above all they based themselves on the illusion of the workers in the intentions of the AFM generated by the new situation.

These illusions, created in part by the very support that the reformist workers parties gave to the AFM, were to permit the AFM to isolate and even break the most advanced workers struggles (CTT, TAP, Lisnave, etc); and this was done with the crucial support of the CP and even of the Trade Union Federation, which strengthened itself through the adherence of new layers of workers awakening to struggle.

While the AFM was gaining experience in practical politics, in asserting its own importance, and was pursuing its Bonapartist ambitions, the Communist and Socialist parties set themselves the task of preventing any generalization of the struggles, isolating the most conscious and combative workers from the rest of the working class, and centering more and more on the Trade Union Federation, directing it toward playing the role of a reformist apparatus keeping the workers in line.

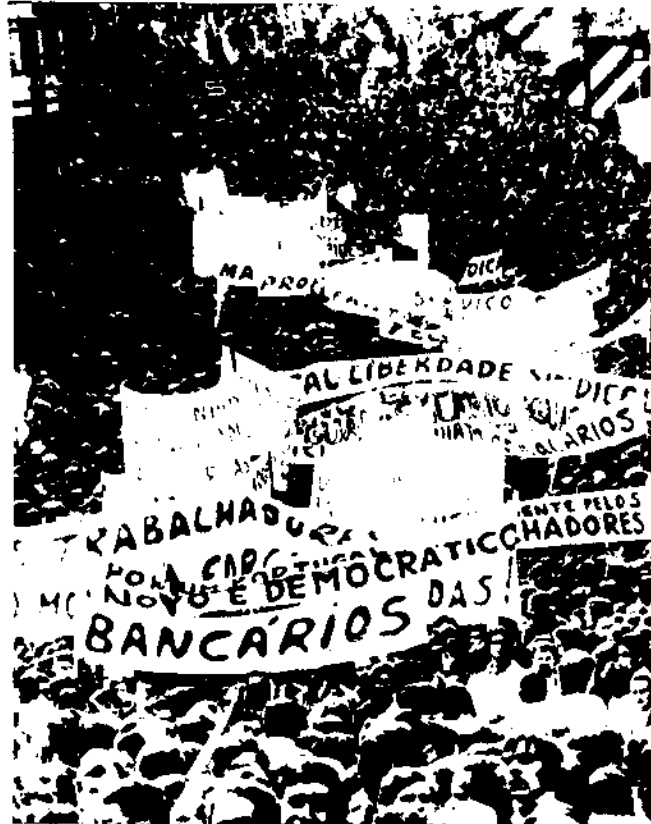
Bonapartist military regime of the bourgeoisie

We now find ourselves in a society in which bourgeois relations of production continue to reign and capitalists continue to dominate, but in which the centers of political power escape the direct control of the bourgeoisie; or, rather they escape the control of any of the bourgeoisie's parties. A military caste has emerged over and above the two fundamental antagonistic social classes, over and above the owners and proletariat, the exploiters and exploited, a caste establishing a regime behind which is hidden the reality of finance capital.

... Moreover, both the political situation and the regime immediately proved to be unstable. The center of the exercise of political power is located in the political structures of the AFM and the armed forces themselves. Several bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political tendencies, and even certain sectors tied to the workers movement, coexist within the army at various levels of leadership. While it is true that the army properly so called remains a bourgeois institution (like the entire state apparatus), it is also true that within the army there is an unstable equilibrium between the hierarchy and the traditional structures on the one hand and the structures and hierarchy expressing the reformist petty-bourgeois tendencies that have worked out the program of the AFM on the other hand. Finally, because of the relative equilibrium in the strength of the classes, the relative equilibrium within the army itself, and the relations the army maintains with social movements, the Junta of National Salvation, the Coordinating Commission, and the AFM itself appear on the political scene as relatively independent mediators.

The ruling class, the bourgeoisie, rules through a reformist petty-bourgeois military caste. This military caste, in turn, rules thanks to bourgeois institutions, laws, and ideology. Hence, it is clear that conflicts had to arise within the state apparatus between the ruling class and the form through which it rules, conflicts that express themselves more specifically in confrontations between various centers of the exercise of political power. It is thus that the development of the class struggle and the political choices that it necessitated, especially on the colonial question, led to an intense struggle between the Spínola forces and the radical petty-bourgeois sectors of the AFM. While the Bonapartist regime was consolidating its hold, the continuation of the armed struggle of the workers of Angola and Mozambique, the signs of fraternization between Portuguese soldiers and fighters of the liberation movements, and the pressures of sectors of the left wing of the AFM and of the reformist workers parties compelled Spínola to retreat in the implementation of his neocolonial plans, while nevertheless continuing to try to force the liberation movements to make maximum concessions (especially in Angola) so as to impose a neocolonial solution with imperialism and the political forces tied to it (the Angola National Liberation Front, UNITA, Mobutu). At the same time, the sectors of the state apparatus most directly representing the interests of finance capital took advantage of the relative ebb in workers struggles (after the end of June) to repress the action of the revolutionary organizations and issue decrees repressing the right to strike, the right of assembly, etc. They tried in this way to open the road for the capitalists to be able to recover what they had been forced to concede during the period immediately following the fall of the dictatorship. Layoffs, inflation, and intensification of the work pace were the means of implementing this operation. . . .

To attain these goals of economic restructuring, of integration into the Common Market, the Portuguese bourgeoisie needed to deprive the workers of the gains the bourgeoisie had been forced to concede. Hence, the bourgeoisie repressed the most advanced workers struggles, allowed the far-right organizations to develop, and thus encouraged reaction. Galvao de Melo did not hesitate to discuss with the members of the PIDE (former political police) who had mutinied.



The difficulties in the application of the initial tactic of finance capital (federalist decolonization and the establishment of a strong state under the leadership of Spínola) encouraged certain of those sectors most closely tied to colonial exploitation, stock market speculation, and the most backward industrial branches to act on their own account, to seek to organize certain layers of the petty-bourgeoisie in the context of a reactionary program.

After the initial shock, the big bankers and industrialists recovered their forces. . . . They tried through various maneuvers to put pressure on the provisional government to more clearly define its policy as one in service of finance capital and, in any case, as a policy assuring sufficient profits on investment. Thus, the guarantees offered by the second provisional government — which was formed after the unsuccessful constitutional coup of Palma Carlos — were not long in coming. Vasco Gonçalves's speech was clear in this regard. The price of bread, sugar, and milk were to go up. The necessity of saving was affirmed. All Portuguese, he said, had to make an effort to reconstruct the economy that had been led to chaos by fascism. He asked the capitalists not to be discouraged, to invest and make a profit. He asked the workers to demand jobs, to accept all sacrifices, and not to disturb the smooth functioning of the factories. . . .

This first overall offensive of the bourgeoisie was made possible by the policy of the reformists; but it clashed with the resistance of the most combative sectors of the proletariat (the TAP strike, the Jornal da Comercio, Lisnave).

During this whole period the bourgeoisie was seeking to rapidly resolve the colonial question. But after the independence of Guinea-Bissau, the Lusaka accords showed not only that the Portuguese bourgeoisie, with the aid of imperialism and the African bourgeoisie, was hoping to extract accords and concessions from the liberation movements, but also that it was forced to make concessions much more rapidly than it desired. In Angola, where the military situation was not so unfavorable, where the liberation movements were divided (even the MPLA itself), and where the interests of imperialism and the natural wealth (diamonds, oil) were greater, the tactic was different. Spínola sought to take direct charge of the question of the decolonization of Angola (cease-fire, provisional government including both the liberation movements and the other organizations, elections to a constituent assembly, etc.) with the aim of shunting the MPLA aside and relying on the support of Mobutu and Holden Roberto Savimbi to impose a neocolonial solution.

Political meaning of September 28

On September 19, after an appeal from Spínola, the "silent majority" was invited to demonstrate its support for the president of the republic. It quickly became clear that many forces of the right and the far right were uniting around a demonstration scheduled for September 28. Capitalist sectors that had supported the April 25 coup (Champallimaud, Galvao de Melo) felt they were being overtaken by events and were concerned about the ties between the AFM and the reformist parties. They linked up with legionnaires like Casal, Ribeiro, and well-known colons like Franco Mogueira and Kaulza de Ariaga.

The right and the far right mobilized. There were more and more right-wing banquets; arms were accumulated. On September 25 the reactionary forces occupied the Campo Pequeno (a sports arena). That represented the first show of force by the right. Spínola was given an ovation, and he accepted the role being offered him. Growing sectors of finance capital tied to North American imperialism or Brazilian subimperialism and those sections of the bourgeoisie most attached to the colonial system (Espirite Santo Bank, etc.) more or less openly supported this offensive of the right and the far right. It was above all the rural petty bourgeoisie that mobilized in combination with the demonstrations of the reactionary colons of Angola and Mozambique. This offensive aimed at provoking a split in the army and the dissolution of the AFM. The September 28 demonstration was intended to create a situation of tension that would allow Spínola to declare a state of siege, assume full powers, and repress the workers and revolutionary organizations. But against this demonstra-

tion there arose a workers mobilization stimulated by the Trade Union Federation and various workers and revolutionary organizations. This mobilization, with the formation of barricades, in its turn forced the intervention of the AFM and determined the direction of its action. Spínola and the various groups involved in the operation retreated when they saw the relationship of forces both within the AFM and between the AFM and the army was unfavorable to them.

The working class emerged strengthened from the test of September 28. Many workers understood their own capacity to struggle against reaction. This was the case with the typographers, who prevented publication of advertisements in favor of the "silent majority," and with the drivers and conductors, who disorganized the reactionary demonstration by refusing to take people to it. Nevertheless, it is necessary to distinguish between the workers' capacity for mobilization and their degree of political consciousness. The reformist organizations and parties succeeded in deflecting the workers from an anticapitalist struggle concentrating their attention on the struggle against reaction and fascism.

It was the proletariat's incapacity to intervene in the crisis as an independent and determining force that allowed the AFM to regain control of the situation, to replace the barricades erected by workers who were exercising class vigilance against the reactionaries with groups of soldiers who inspected vehicles and even permitted Spínola to deliver a resignation speech in which he called on national and international capitalists to resort to economic weapons and put pressure on the provisional government, preparing to bring it down if necessary.

The political backwardness of the Portuguese proletariat and the class-collaborationist policy developed by the reformists also explains one of the immediate results of the events of September 27 and 28: the "Sunday workdays" proposed by Vasco Gonçalves. These extra workdays were supposed to deepen the workers' illusions in the myth of national reconstruction and to prove to imperialism that the government and the AFM were in control of the situation. Undoubtedly, one of the political consequences of September 28 was the consolidation of the Bonapartist military regime.

Since September 28

The reformist workers parties, above all the CP, judged that their hour had come after September 28. Did they not appear as the saviors of the nation and democracy? This, they assumed, would create a new relationship of forces that would allow them to strengthen their influence and position within the state apparatus. But they succeeded only in strengthening the AFM's power in political life in general and in the workers movement in particular. And the AFM, by its very nature as an integral part of the armed forces, whose existence and functioning are

tied in a thousand ways to bourgeois society, can only serve the bourgeoisie itself. It is for that reason that the initiatives of the CP (struggle against the monopolies, agrarian reform, advocating that the AFM participate in the elections to the constituent assembly) will in every case be changed around by government bodies that must represent the "greatest unity" between the "people and the armed forces." It is for that reason that the CP's veiled criticisms of certain ministers and certain laws run up against a discrete but firm opposition from the Council of Twenty (the AFM) and the Council of Ministers. The CP did not gain anything by abandoning the most radical aspects of its eight-point program (like nationalization of the monopolies) during its last extraordinary congress, when it adapted itself even more to the program of the AFM. At that point a new period opened during which the strengthening of the AFM was to be combined with its progressive transformation (through its managing of the interests of the bourgeoisie) and its program was developed, but in the "worst" sense. At the same time, the AFM is extending its base in the armed forces; its hierarchy is merging with the traditional hierarchy. This is the moment in which the AFM became dissolved into the state apparatus, losing its initial independence of the bourgeois state exactly to the extent that its governmental responsibilities increase. All the laws that the AFM proposes and that the provisional government adopts are marked by bourgeois reformism. The latest example is provided by the Melo Antunes economic and social plan, whose Social Democratic character was in no way altered by the changes proposed by the Coordinating Commission and approved during the most recent AFM assembly of delegates.

The bourgeoisie, forced to retreat, with the sectors most favorable to a new coup crushed, has changed its tactics. It is now seeking all the influence it can get within the armed forces and the government while actively preparing itself for the elections.

At the same time, the reformist workers parties, and above all the CP, are making desperate maneuvers in order to shift the policy of the AFM in their favor, with the more or less declared intention of making the army carry out the process of basic reform, of making the army confirm the decisive importance of the CP, guaranteeing its permanent place in the government and increasing the support and confidence of the workers for the policy of CP participation in the provisional government, thus making possible an "authentic democracy," or at least a democracy as conceived by the CP. But the AFM is not a revolutionary vanguard, and big capital cannot be fought with the means and methods being proposed by the CP and the AFM. The CP is betraying the working class by trying to link it to classes that will in turn betray it. This whole evolution of political relationships is diminishing the fears of the bourgeoisie, strengthening its confidence in the ability of Bonapartism to manage the crisis and defend the bourgeoisie's own interests; it is permitting the bourgeoisie to face the future with more confidence and to prepare for an electoral victory



Workers' power in action: on 28 September workers threw up roadblocks around Lisbon and searched all vehicles to prevent reactionary forces entering the city for the 'silent majority' demonstration

of the right-wing parties thanks to their financial power and political influence, especially in the rural areas.

Given the Portuguese bourgeoisie's narrow margin for economic maneuver, the political incapacity of the reformist parties, the present fragility of the revolutionary organizations, and the divisions within the working class (divisions that are aggravated by unemployment, some partial defeats, and the isolation of the most combative sectors of the heavy battalions of the working class), a rightist electoral victory would give rise to an attempt to set up a strong state, that is, a state with a strongly centralized executive able to channel and repress workers struggles. But in order for it to be possible to establish such a state without grave social confrontations breaking out, it is necessary that the resistance of the working class be virtually nil, that the workers be demoralized and demobilized by the provisional government.

The present economic and political situation is full of difficulties for the bourgeoisie, however. Contrary to the predictions of Minister Rui Vilar, galloping inflation is continuing, the flight of capital goes on, and crooked bankruptcies are on the rise; layoffs are continuing, and the number of unemployed has already risen to 150,000. This figure is bound to increase even more because of the return of the soldiers from Africa and the difficulties with which Portuguese immigrant workers in West Europe are confronted. Bank deposits remain low despite the increase in the interest rate. This implies credit restrictions. Many small and middle-sized companies are facing grave problems. The balance of trade is deteriorating, with very large deficits appearing. Income from tourism is diminishing and the inflow of currency sent by immigrant workers is not increasing, thus worsening the balance of payments. Investment is being made only cautiously and is even declining. The crisis in agriculture is rampant. And if that is not enough, the attempts to modify the agrarian system through decrees on the rate of cultivation and utilization of fallow land are clashing

with the political backwardness of the peasants and the traditional inertia of agrarian structures. Finally, the students are not studying and the reformist technocratic reform of the educational system is marking time.

The resolution of the economic crisis of the bourgeoisie cannot be effected simply through an attack on the working and living conditions of the working class; it also and above all necessitates the resolution of the crisis of bourgeois rule. The bourgeoisie is now using two means to achieve this goal: Through an emergency economic and social plan it is reducing the power of certain sections of the bourgeoisie that had constituted the main prop of the fascist regime; and it is limiting and attacking the conditions of life and possibilities of struggle of the working class.

Moreover, the bourgeoisie is especially trying to utilize the elections to the constituent assembly to derail the struggles of the workers in the factories, trade unions, and factory commissions, directing these struggles toward electoral channels; it is trying to substitute the demand for a democratic constituent assembly for the economic and social demands of the masses. Further, an electoral victory of the forces of the capitalist right (the CDF and PPD) would permit the bourgeoisie to use the constituent assembly to legitimize the new forms of rule and to accelerate the formation of a strong state that as far as possible would conserve a certain appearance of democracy in order better to fool the workers.

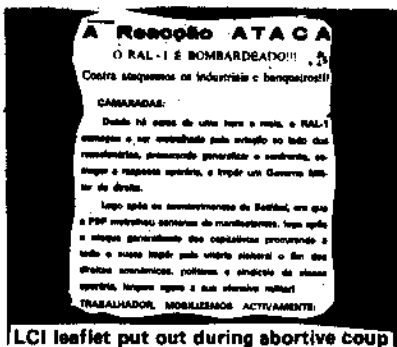
In face of all this, it is necessary that revolutionaries adopt a clear position on the constituent assembly elections. They must intervene actively in the elections and implacably denounce the nature and objectives of the elections by utilizing them to develop their revolutionary agitation and propaganda, by using the constituent assembly as a tribunal for denouncing the exploitation of capitalist society, but always subordinating the intervention in bourgeois institutions to the struggle for self-management and direct action by the toiling masses. □

For a revolutionary workers government

The following is an excerpt from the programme which the LCI put forward in its campaign for the Constituent Assembly elections.

'Defeated on the terrain of mass struggle, the bourgeoisie is seeking to channel onto the electoral terrain the combativity of which the masses have shown themselves capable. They are seeking to turn the attention of the masses away from the real centres of struggle where their future will be decided - the anti-capitalist struggle of the masses in the factories, the working class neighbourhoods, the barracks, and the streets, the creation of autonomous organisations of the workers' struggle, independent of the bosses and their state - and to turn their attention towards a false objective: elections, where the bourgeoisie hope to see a major victory of their parties (the Popular Democratic Party, the Centre Democrats).

On the basis of such a victory the bourgeoisie will seek to reconstitute and reinforce the machinery of the state which serves them, place new limitations on the social, trade union and political rights of the working class, and so prepare for a new offensive against the living and working standards of the workers and all working people...



LCI leaflet put out during abortive coup

'Nevertheless, we understand that it is important to raise the voice of revolutionaries in the election campaign and in the Constituent Assembly itself:

'To denounce all forms of capitalist oppression and exploitation of the workers, peasants, and soldiers, and to push forward the struggle to defend their working and living conditions, the struggle for their social and economic rights;

'To denounce all the manoeuvres of capitalist reaction - economic sabotage, the preparation of new reactionary attacks - and to promote forms of struggle and organisation against capitalist reaction, both internally and internationally;

'To expose the intentions of the capitalists to use the Constituent Assembly to restrict the trade union and political rights of the workers, peasants and soldiers;

'To defend the unity of the working class, the united front of the class, as the only effective way in which to struggle against exploitation, reaction, and the political power of the capitalists, to defend proletarian methods of struggle, and to criticise the reformist methods of class collaboration and the gradual and peaceful passage to socialism;

'To advocate the programme and revolutionary government of the working class;

'To advocate the road of the revolutionary general strike and the armed insurrection of the masses to destroy the capitalist state and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism;

'To fight colonialism and neo-colonialism, and imperialist penetration in Portugal;

'To promote proletarian internationalism, through revolutionary support for the struggles of workers throughout the world.

'It is for these purposes that the LCI is presenting candidates in the elections, aware of the role which it must play in the electoral process: to promote the unity of the working class and, at the same time, to present an alternative, a revolutionary solution, to the economic and political crisis of Portugal, and a solution to the crisis of revolutionary leadership for the workers' struggles: the construction of a mass revolutionary workers' party...

'Through the development of the unity and organisation of the working class in the fight against capitalist reaction, we know that it is possible to replace the present government of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie by a revolutionary workers' government, a government made up of all workers' and revolutionary organisations, supported by the mobilisation and permanent offensive of the working class against exploitation and the power of the capitalist state. Such a government would be capable of delivering profound blows to the economic and political power of capital.

'The programme of this government must involve:

'1. The expropriation without compensation of the most important industrial, commercial and agricultural businesses, along with the major means of social communication (TV, radio, cinema, newspapers), and their operation under workers' control;

'2. Establishment of the power of the workers' government over the entire credit system, and the establishment of a single state bank;

'3. The establishment of a monopoly power of foreign trade by the workers' government to combat economic boycott and aggression by the imperialist powers;

'4. Support for the poor peasants through the setting up of a system of credit and technical aid, with an agrarian reform that frees the poor peasants from all debts and mortgages, and, as far as tenants on nationalised lands are concerned, ensures that they receive the product of the land they work.

'5. Expropriation of all war industries.

'6. Creation of a central economic planning agency, integrated and under the control of the mass organisations (workers' commissions, industry committees, trade unions, cooperatives).

'7. A sliding scale of wages and hours; immediate creation of free social services and education; drastic reduction in the price of public transport, energy and housing.

'8. Repeal of all laws which defend the interests of the bourgeoisie and the replacement of bourgeois courts by judicial bodies democratically elected by working people.

'9. Participation of the mass organisations in all levels and forms of the running of social life. These mass organisations must be structured according to the principles of proletarian democracy, which demands elections at all levels, the regular presentation of accounts, and the permanent control and right of recall by the base of all elected representatives; the remuneration of these representatives not to exceed the average wage of a manual worker.

'10. The general arming of the workers and the replacement of the army and the police by a workers' militia and voluntary vigilance bodies integrated and controlled by the working class.

'11. Withdrawal of Portugal from NATO, an end to the Iberian Pact [counter-revolutionary defence agreement signed between Portugal and Spain in 1942], repeal of all treaties with imperialist powers, abolition of secret diplomacy, and the launching of a foreign policy of anti-imperialist support for the former colonies and revolutionary internationalist support for the struggles of the workers of the world; against the Europe of the exploiters and the monopolies - fight for the Socialist United States of Europe.